Secretary Albright

The U.S. and France: A Strengthened Partnership for a New Century

June 19, 1998

Remarks to the French-American Business Council, Washington, DC.

Minister Strauss-Kahn, Ambassador Rohatyn, Ambassador Bondurant, Dana Mead, Michel Bon, distinguished founders of the French-American Business Council: thank you for inviting me to share your inaugural lunch.

There is always one problem with speaking to such a distinguished and serious body as this, particularly when you are preceded by other speakers and an excellent meal.

Either you can give short, witty remarks—and miss the chance to say something important; or you can ponder aloud the fate of the world—and risk inducing in your audience indigestion, sleep, or both.

There is, however, a happy compromise, and that is to talk about serious matters, but to do at least some of it in French—because, as I am sure my friend the Minister would agree, it is simply not possible to sound dull in French.

[English translation follows]

D'abord, je remercie Dana Mead pour son aimable présentation. Je me réjouis de vous voir à la tête d'un groupe aussi important. Dana a déjà fait une carrière distinguée dans les plus hautes institutions publiques et privées de notre pays. L'année dernière, il a fait un travail superbe en tant que Président américain du "Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue." Je suis sûre qu'ici aussi, il fera de grandes choses.

Il y a deux cent vingt ans, nos pays ont noué une amitié profonde basée en partie sur le caractère extraordinaire, et les nobles idéaux, de notre premier chef-de-mission à Paris, Benjamin Franklin.

De Franklin à Pamela Harriman, nous avons la tradition de choisir des géants de la vie américaine pour nous représenter à Paris. Avec Felix Rohatyn, cette tradition continue.

Si jamais un ambassadeur pouvait servir d'interprète entre deux civilisations brillantes, fières et parfois obstinées, ce serait vous, Felix.

Si jamais un conseil se réunissait, sage, pragmatique et comprenant le mystère, si mystère il y a, de la coopération entre nos pays, ce conseil serait bien le vôtre.

Sur l'Internet, à la télévision, dans nos écoles et nos journaux, vous trouverez des millions de sites, organisations et idées qui partagent l'expression "Franco-Américain."

Mais vous n'y trouverez ni "global rivalry" ni "Anglo-Saxons perfides."

Parfois, dans les couloirs de la diplomatie, cela s'oublie; mais nous partageons un héritage fondamental, nous les Américains et les Français, innovateurs en art et sciences, pionniers de la démocratie et de la justice.

[English translation]

First, I want to thank Dana Mead for his kind introduction. I am delighted to see you heading such an important group. Dana has already had a distinguished career in the highest public and private institutions of our country. Last year he did a superb job as U.S. Chair of the "Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue." I am sure he will do great things here as well.

Two hundred and twenty years ago, our countries became fast friends, owing in part to the exceptional character and noble ideals of our first chief of mission in Paris, Benjamin Franklin. From Franklin to Pamela Harriman, it has been our tradition to choose giants of American life to represent us in Paris. This tradition is continuing with Felix Rohatyn.

If ever an ambassador was able to serve as interpreter between two brilliant, proud, and sometimes stubborn civilizations, you, Felix, are that ambassador.

If ever a council was wise, pragmatic, and understood the mystery—if it is a mystery—of cooperation between our countries, it is your council.

On the Internet, on television, in our schools and newspapers, you will find millions of sites, organizations, and ideas that have in common the words, "French-American."

What you will not find in them is either "global rivalry" or "perfidious Anglo-Saxons." Sometimes, in the corridors of diplomacy, this is forgotten; but we share a fundamental heritage,

we, Americans and French, innovators in the arts and sciences, pioneers of democracy and justice.

[End Translation]

It was said once—probably by someone across an ocean or channel somewhere—that Americans and French have difficulty getting along because we are too much alike. I, for one, see that as high praise.

For if you come right down to it, when the world needs principled leadership for peace, prosperity and freedom, and against aggression and terror, time after time our nations have acted together.

The reason is that our world views are too much alike, and our hopes and dreams too similar, to prevent the differences we sometimes have from undermining the kinship we must never lose.

For that reason, I made it a priority as Secretary of State—beginning in Paris on the second day of my first official overseas trip—to build solid relations with my French counterparts.

I have been very pleased with the response, and the commitment we have achieved to work together as much as possible and to settle our differences in a way that reflects our close friendship.

I am pleased as well that this brilliant new Council of French and American leaders has come together because there is so much to gain, in diplomacy and commerce as well as education, culture and other fields, if we do even better and cooperate even more.

The private sector has a critical role in building and maintaining ties in two areas. First, within Europe, by sustaining momentum toward a continent that is whole, prosperous and free; and second, across the Atlantic, in strengthening our economic relations, so that they may serve as a model of openness and shared prosperity around the globe.

This job is critical, for if we fail, if we act as rivals, not as partners, the world financial system will weaken, and workers, consumers, investors and businesspeople will pay a terrible price.

In looking to the future, we draw confidence from the past. For in Europe, the United States and France have stood together through peace and war, prosperity and hardship, periods of amity and times of disagreement.

After 1945, we were partners in rebuilding the economies of Western Europe. Since 1989, we have worked together to help extend in Central and Eastern Europe the rule of law—whether in its Napoleonic or Anglo-American form.

Throughout we have worked together, not always smoothly but with tremendous success, to develop the network of institutions that has brought strength and prosperity to Europe itself—and resilience to the bonds between Europe and North America.

In April, America reaffirmed its commitment to a new NATO. And in Berlin in May, President Clinton called for a new Transatlantic Partnership for the 21st century. In the months ahead, as we prepare for a series of important summits in 1999, we will be having a conversation with France and our other partners. That conversation will be about how we can best shape a future in which Europe will always be able to count on America, and America will always be able to count on Europe.

In looking ahead, we see three central tasks: completing the integration of Europe; strengthening the partnership between Europe and North America; and keeping our alliance prepared for whatever challenges we may face.

These tasks are neither American nor French, but common tasks, in which both our nations must play a central and indispensable role.

Together, we must continue our joint efforts to build a world of greater security, opportunity, tolerance, and law: flying NATO missions over the Balkans; defusing tensions in southern Lebanon; working to substitute negotiation for nuclearization in South Asia; striving to bring a new Africa more fully into the world economy.

Both in Europe and beyond, our nations also share a responsibility and an interest in being leaders for economic opportunity; and we depend on the participation of bold and visionary business partners, such as those represented here.

And though America and France have chosen different means to this end, we have both sought to build economies at home that are diverse and dynamic as well as sustainable and sound. And we are leaders for a global trading system that is increasingly fair as well as free.

Recently, we have had a run of successes in finding pragmatic ways to promote our shared commercial interests.

Our new Air Services Agreement will fully liberalize our civil air markets within 5 years.

We worked together to conclude the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, responding to a central concern of many American firms—and setting an example for the world.

And at last month's U.S.-EU Summit, the United States and France worked with other EU members to open new possibilities for economic cooperation.

We adopted the Trans-Atlantic Economic Partnership, an important initiative for trade. Through it, we will reduce trade barriers between our nations and promote global trade liberalization. We will give special attention to the commerce of tomorrow in areas such as biotechnology, Internet business, and telecommunications. And we will seek to raise standards for environmental protection and worker rights.

We were also able to bridge our differences over sanctions against countries that threaten our security and flout international norms. This has been one of the most contentious issues in U.S.-French and U.S.-European relations, and while I do not expect the May understandings to end the debate, I believe they form a sound basis for progress.

By taking the high ground of common ground on this difficult issue, we were able to take a negative in our relations and squeeze positive results from it, in the form of strong new rules to deter investment in illegally expropriated property.

Those rules will enhance protection for European and American investors all over the world.

At the same time, the understandings related to the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act will further strengthen our already close cooperation in countering terrorism and opposing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

I know that the understandings reached do not fully satisfy either side. Some in France and other EU countries believe they did not go far enough. And quite a few in this country believe that we have gone too far.

For these understandings to succeed, both sides must faithfully implement their provisions. By doing so, we can build a pattern of frank exchange and pragmatic cooperation that will serve us well in all our trade relations.

For example, I expect you are all familiar with our current difficulties over American export of genetically modified corn products to France. Let me assure you that I am not going to get into the science of it—but let me also say that it is clearly in the interest of both our nations and our exporters, and not just in agriculture, that we have a regulatory process in place that is straightforward, predictable, and fair.

The road ahead is one in which both sides must fulfill commitments and maintain solidarity toward common goals. Both sides must commit to a policy of no surprises. And both must prevent small differences from interfering with or lessening our cooperation on what really matters.

The kind of global gamesmanship of which our diplomatic communities so often suspect each other is simply passe, for this high-speed, high-tech world is no longer zero-sum. And either we will secure its benefits for all nations, or we will surely all fall victim to its perils.

Both our nations must participate in lowering trade barriers—or neither will escape economic distortions and debilitating regional trade wars.

And both of us must stand together for peace and human rights, and against the forces of terrorism and aggression—or neither of us will be immune from the threats they pose.

Finally, we must learn the lessons of our shared history and be innovators and pioneers who challenge norms and look fearlessly to the future, not remain trapped in the past.

Today, that means building a trans-Atlantic partnership between governments and businesses to promote our common interests, from stable growth in Eastern Europe to recovery in Asia and trade liberalization worldwide.

It means supporting each other as we build a Europe that is strong, integrated, and open—from maintaining a robust NATO to seeing the European Union expand and ensuring that the European Monetary Union succeeds.

And it means encouraging cooperation between governments and the private sector, to keep us pointed toward the future, whether the subject is bits, bytes, or movie rights.

That may sound like a tall order. But as Napoleon once said in response to a letter, "You write to me that it is impossible; the word is not French." I would say that it's not American, either.

Ours are peoples who once fought and won desperate battles together and who today end wars and build space stations together.

We share a love of liberty that is rooted in our twin revolutions; and a respect for the rule of law that grows out of our experience with democracy's triumphs — and its discontents.

And we are seldom accused of thinking too small.

At the end of his long life, Jean Monnet wrote that a great leader "is one who can work for long-term goals which eventually suit situations as yet unforeseen."

Monnet and his colleagues from Europe and America laid the groundwork 50 years ago for the security and prosperity we enjoy today, in a world of great power amity and technological advance they could never have imagined.

Let us take up the challenge to forge for a new generation the structures which will carry us safely through the unforeseen century ahead.

I am proud to have this group as companions on that path. I congratulate you on your vision. And I look forward to working with you to reach our goals together. ■

Secretary Albright

Strengthening U.S.-Asian Ties

June 17, 1998

Remarks at the 1998 Asia Society Dinner, New York, NY.

I'm very delighted to be here. Thank you very much, Hank, for that wonderful introduction—my good friend, Nick Platt, David Comansky. Congratulations to my fellow honorees: Peter Kann, P.H. Koo, and Jonathon Spence.

I have to tell you that my speech is a little long tonight, but it's raining and you can't go anywhere, anyway. Besides, if I can't give a long speech on Asia to this group, I can't do it anywhere. So I am very glad, members of the Asia Society and guests, to be here, and very pleased to have this opportunity.

As a professor in my former life, I used to ask my students to put aside the map we customarily use, which shows North and South America as the center of the world. Instead, I would turn the globe to the great Asian land mass and make the point that, to most of the people on Earth, that is the center of the world.

I am a great fan of the Asia Society because it sees the value in building bridges between these two worlds and these two perceptions. No work is more important for the 21st century than promoting understanding across the Asia Pacific. And, in this effort, you have made great progress. To cite just two examples, by strengthening U.S.-Asian ties, you've done wonders for the pitching staffs of the Yankees and Mets. And you have created such a reservoir of goodwill within Asia that it even survived my singing last summer at ASEAN.

In recent weeks, I have given a series of commencement addresses, and I have been struck by the number of Asian surnames among the graduates. This is a huge change from a generation ago, and it shows that the Asian and American cultures will enrich each other even more in the decades to come. That is the good news. The bad news is that, through much of Asia, the past year has been one of enormous stress. The financial crisis first sent ripples, then shockwaves, throughout the region. A lot of good, hardworking people have had their hopes for the future dashed or put on hold. Tonight, as we meet, the crisis continues to deepen.

All this has great implications. For this audience, I do not have to spell out the vast connections. Previous speakers have explained all that. But there are vast connections now that exist between our security, prosperity, and freedom and that of Asia's. But I do want to stress the importance of getting that message out to the American people. I find it very disturbing, quite frankly, that Congress has not approved funds to back efforts by the International Monetary Fund to help Asian economies reform and restore financial confidence. Nor has it approved our request to pay the $1 billion we owe to the United Nations.

On matters this urgent and fundamental to our national interests, the United States should be a leader, not a laggard. I hope you agree that Congress should act now.

One aspect of the Asia Society's work that I have always admired is that it is inclusive. It is truly the Asia Society, not just a Japan and China society under another name. That is good because despite the importance of those two countries, I intend only to touch on them in my remarks tonight.

I had the great pleasure of visiting Japan last month to reaffirm our unique and wide-ranging partnership, which is stronger than ever. The U.S.-Japan security alliance is a foundation of Asian stability. We coordinate now on issues from elections in Cambodia to proliferation in South Asia to safeguarding the global environment. While in Tokyo, I took the opportunity to express U.S. concerns about Japan's economic situation. These concerns remain very substantial.

Japan has committed more than $40 billion through bilateral and multilateral channels to help other nations weather the region's financial crisis. Unfortunately, the continuing stagnation of Japan's economy and the resulting depreciation of the yen are viewed by many as a serious obstacle to regional recovery. Japanese investment and trade have been vital contributors to the Asian miracle. If Asia is to grow again, Japan's economy must return to health.

The world is looking to Japan for leadership, and Prime Minister Hashimoto has already taken some courageous steps to stimulate the economy and address problems in Japan's financial sector. We welcome the $116 billion fiscal stimulus package approved this week by Japan's Parliament. We also were pleased with the Prime Minister's announcement this morning that Japan will make every effort to restore its banking system to health, to achieve domestic demand-led growth, and to open and deregulate its markets.

In the context of this plan to strengthen Japan's economy, Secretary Rubin indicated that U.S. and Japanese monetary authorities have cooperated in intervening in exchange markets. As you know, the President talked with Prime Minister Hashimoto last evening and assured him of U.S. support for Japan's actions so that it can once more serve as the engine of Asian growth.

As for China, the President set out our policy in his speech in Washington last Thursday. Now, as you know, there are a number in Congress and elsewhere who say the President shouldn't go to China. I deeply respect their right to be wrong.

The President will have the opportunity to say things in Beijing that the people of China cannot say and have not heard. His very presence in Tiananmen Square will ensure that the world does not forget, as it must not forget, the terrible wrongs perpetrated there. But the President will also focus on the future. In Beijing, he will support China's constructive role in responding to the South Asia nuclear tests, and urge China to do all it can to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and the systems that deliver them.

He will seek to bring China further into the world economy, to establish greater common ground on global issues, and to reaffirm the importance of democracy in Hong Kong. He will express concern about preserving the unique cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of Tibet. And he will stress the universal nature of human rights, including the right of peaceful political dissent and the right freely and without harassment to worship God.

In short, he will go to Beijing to advance America's interest in a peaceful, prosperous, and free world. China must participate and cooperate if such a world is to be achieved. That is why, in going to China, the President is doing exactly what he should be doing, and I hope he will have your understanding and support.

But as I said, I'm not going to talk about China tonight. Nor do I plan to talk, as I often have in recent weeks, about South Asia, although this Society has been very active in promoting better ties to, and within, that vital region. Instead, I want to take advantage of the Asia Society's emphasis on diversity, and focus on three countries that illustrate that diversity quite dramatically—the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Obviously, these countries are quite different culturally as well as geographically. But each has an important role to play in regional and global affairs. Each is in the midst of a historic transition, and the course of events in each will do much to shape the challenges and opportunities of the new century.

I will begin with Korea, and, more specifically, with my reaction to the new President of that country which is, to use an old Confucian expression, "Halleluia."

As was evident to me during my visit to Seoul, where I did make great friends with the Foreign Minister—we had Georgetown in common and many other things, and we did hit it off immediately. During my visit to Seoul in May, and to the world during his state visit to the United States last week, President Kim Dae Jung is a truly remarkable man. More than any other person, he has discredited the worn-out debate between so-called Asian values and Western values. President Kim embodies human values, which apply everywhere to everybody, and for that alone he will be honored by the historians of our age.

But the long-time hero is also a new president and, in that capacity, he has his work cut out for him. During the summit last week, President Clinton made it clear that the United States cherishes our alliance with Seoul and our friendship with the Korean people. In addition to our alliance with Japan, this relationship is the bedrock of our security strategy in Northeast Asia, which aims, in part, to facilitate a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

President Kim has approached this issue with great confidence. The United States fully supports his efforts to reinstitute a regular North-South dialogue in parallel to the Four-Party talks. We have agreed to coordinate closely on the issue of sanctions. We are conveying a common message to the North on the importance of adhering to the Agreed Framework. After all, the South Asia tests provide no license for the North to renege on its commitments. And do not doubt that we will live up to ours.

Few countries have been hit as hard by the financial crisis as South Korea. Fortunately, the shortcomings of the past are clearly recognized by the new government. President Kim has shown courage in attempting to get Korea's financial house in order. But this is a complex and painful task that will be opposed both by the architects of the old system and by those hurt most by the adjustments now required.

The road ahead is rocky, but the United States stands fully behind Korea's reform program. And there are reasons to be optimistic. No one can doubt the resilience of the Korean people or their ability to overcome setbacks. A reformed Korean economy, spurred by more open markets, and by a cleaner and more accountable financial sector, would be a formidable and world-class competitor.

I'm told there is an old Korean adage, cited by President Kim in his letters from jail, that even if the heavens were to crash down, there is a hole through which to rise up, and even if taken in a tiger's teeth, there is a way to survive. Korea, like its President, has known hard times before.

". . .I believe Korea will emerge from the present problems stronger and with unshakable U.S. support, safer, and more secure."

Because it has chosen the democratic path and is facing its problems squarely, I believe Korea will emerge from the present problems stronger and with unshakable U.S. support, safer, and more secure.

One of the lessons of the past year is a lesson Kim Dae Jung has been teaching for decades: Democracies are better able to adjust to change than regimes that are autocratic. A true democracy has flexibility built into its system. The public has outlets for expressing anxiety, frustration, and new ideas. Leaders can point to a popular mandate to carry out difficult policies. In times of stress, a democratic people is more likely to pull together than to fall apart.

There could be no better illustration of all this than the past year of living precariously in Indonesia. Here, the financial crisis led to massive demonstrations, ugly ethnic-related violence, the martyrdom of at least four students, and a sudden end to the rule of President Soeharto.

The new President, B. J. Habibi, has moved to address popular concerns by promising new elections and releasing political prisoners. He has also assembled a strong economic team to grapple with a crisis aggravated by debt, looting, business flight, currency depreciation, rising unemployment, and inflation. Over the long term, Indonesia clearly has the resources and the skills to bounce back. But today, the average citizen is hurting.

If Indonesia is to recover, its new leaders must reach beyond the traditional centers of power to build a consensus for peaceful, but profound, political reform based on democratic principles. It is too early to judge whether the new government will pursue and succeed on such a course. But it is not too early to reaffirm America's commitment to do all we can to help the Indonesian people. This is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing, because prospects for a stable transition to democracy will increase if humanitarian needs are addressed.

Accordingly, I am pleased to report that we have restored to Embassy Jakarta and throughout Indonesia the full complement of our diplomatic, USAID, and other personnel. Second, we will support proposals for new World Bank and Asian Development Bank lending to Indonesia. Third, we are waiting for the report of the IMF team that is now in Jakarta to review its program there and discuss necessary adjustments, including those to address humanitarian concerns. We hope that an agreement can be reached soon that will release the next tranche of funds. Finally, we will be pledging $65 million in food and medical supplies for Indonesia, in addition to our ongoing assistance programs.

The U.S. has long been the world's leading outside supporter of human rights, legal aid, and environmental organizations in Indonesia. Today, those groups are playing an indispensable role in helping their country build a true and lasting democracy. We are considering how best to use our support in the months ahead in areas such as civic education, development of a free press, the promotion of ethnic tolerance, and technical assistance for elections.

President Habibi has also taken steps to begin to address the long-standing problem of East Timor. The United States would strongly support efforts by the new government to build a real consensus on East Timor through additional confidence-building measures, a reduced military presence, and a genuine dialogue with its people.

Indonesia is a country of critical strategic importance. If it is able to recover and move ahead with freer institutions and a more open economy, it will reclaim its position as an anchor of stability and prosperity throughout its region. It will also fulfill, at long last, the deepest aspirations of its people.

Moving now from Southeast Asia to Southwest, we come to another strategic state—the Islamic Republic of Iran. One of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world, Iran is at the center of a region which includes countries that contain three-quarters of the world's population, three-quarters of the world's proven energy resources, and 60% of global GNP. These facts of life, and the critical role that Iran plays in that region, make the question of U.S.-Iran relations a topic of great interest and importance to this Secretary of State.

The United States established relations with Iran, then Persia, in 1856. For decades, our ties were limited but cordial. After the Second World War, America supported Iran in a bitter territorial dispute with the Soviet Union. And through

the first decades of the Cold War, as part of a strategy intended to counter Soviet expansionism, the U.S. supported the Shah's regime and allocated to it large quantities of military and economic assistance.

We did so because of a common strategic interest. We were concerned with an effort to contain the spread of totalitarian influence across the globe. The exigencies of the Cold War also generated U.S. policies and activities that were resented by many Iranians. In retrospect, it is possible to understand their reaction, but the Cold War is now over and it is time to put that period behind us.

After the forced departure of the Shah in 1979, Iran turned inward, in keeping with the Ayatollah Khomeini's slogan that "we must become isolated in order to become independent." This trend was manifested most extremely and unacceptably in the seizure of hostages at the U.S. Embassy.

Neither country has forgotten the past, but most Iranians, like most Americans, are now focused on the future. And clearly, it is possible now—if Iran so chooses—for it to be both fully independent and fully open to the world. Last May, Iran's people were given a chance to voice their support for a more open society and did so. Nearly 70% supported the election of Mohammad Khatemi as President, providing him with a mandate for change, demanding from the Iranian Government greater freedoms, a more civil society based on the rule of law, and a more moderate foreign policy aimed at ending Iran's estrangement from the international community.

At the time, President Clinton welcomed this election, and as a former professor and lifelong student of history, I found the vote remarkable. The depth of the demand for change was obvious. So, too, was the evident desire of young Iranians and many Iranian women for greater openness and more personal liberty.

I was most impressed by the size of the mandate. Twenty million Iranians came forward to make themselves heard in the hope that, by so doing, they could effect real change in their government and in their daily lives.

Since taking office, President Khatemi has responded to the demands of the Iranian people by emphasizing the importance of dialogue among nations and cultures and by acknowledging the world's growing interdependence. He has said that "a society intending to reach development cannot succeed without understanding Western civilization." I would say, in response, that the same can be said with respect to Eastern civilization and Islamic civilization.

President Khatemi has said that the American Government deserves respect because it is a reflection of the great American people. I would say that President Khatemi deserves respect because he is the choice of the Iranian people. In his interview with CNN in January, President Khatemi called for a dialogue between civilizations, something which President Clinton welcomed because of our strongly held view that there is much common ground between Islam and the West and much that we can do to enrich each other's societies.

In past years, Iran's opposition to the Middle East peace process and to those willing to negotiate with Israel has been vitriolic and violent. The Islamic Republic still refuses to recognize Israel, and its leaders continue to denounce Israel in inflammatory and unacceptable terms. But last December, Iranian officials welcomed Chairman Arafat to the Islamic Summit in Tehran and said that, although they did not agree with the logic of the peace process, they would not seek to impose their views and would accept what the Palestinians could accept.

In January, President Khatemi publicly denounced terrorism and condemned the killing of innocent Israelis. He argued that terrorism was not only against Islam but also counterproductive to Iran's purposes. Iran, after all, has also been a victim of terrorism. If these views are translated into a rejection of terrorism as a tool of Iranian statecraft, it would do much to dispel the concerns of the international community from Germany to the Persian Gulf and from Argentina to Algeria.

There are other signs of change, as well. For example, Iran's record in the war against drugs has greatly improved—at least within its own borders—and it has received high marks from the UN for its treatment of more than 2 million Iraqi and Afghan refugees. Iran is also participating in diplomatic efforts to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan and is making a welcome effort to improve relations with Saudi Arabia and other neighbors in the Gulf.

We view these developments with interest, both with regard to the possibility of Iran assuming its rightful place in the world community and the chance for better bilateral ties. However, these hopes must be balanced against the reality that Iran's support for terrorism has not yet ceased, serious violations of human rights persist, and its efforts to develop long-range missiles and to acquire nuclear weapons continue.

The United States opposes, and will continue to oppose, any country selling or transferring to Iran materials and technologies that could be used to develop long-range missiles or weapons of mass destruction. Similarly, we oppose Iranian efforts to sponsor terror. Accordingly, our

economic policies, including with respect to the export pipelines for Caspian oil and gas, remain unchanged.

But let me be clear: These policies are not, as some Iranians allege, anti-Islamic. Islam is the fastest-growing religious faith in the United States. We respect deeply its moral teachings and its role as a source of inspiration and instruction for hundreds of millions of people around the world. U.S. policy is directed at actions, not peoples or faiths. The standards we would like Iran to observe are not merely Western but universal. We fully respect Iran's sovereignty. We understand and respect its fierce desire to maintain its independence. We do not seek to overthrow its government. But we do ask that Iran live up to its commitments to the international community.

"U.S. policy is directed at actions, not peoples or faiths. The standards we would like Iran to observe are not merely Western but universal."

As in Indonesia, we hope Iran's leaders will carry out the people's mandate for a government that respects and protects the rule of law, both in its internal and external affairs. Certainly, Iranian voters last year were concerned primarily with domestic issues. But the Iranian people are also conscious of the critical role their country has long played in a region of global importance. What Iran must decide now is how its strength will be projected and to what ends. Much has changed in the almost 20 years Iran has been outside or on the fringes of the international system.

Nations have recognized, for example, that if they are to safeguard their own interests from the threat of terror, they cannot tolerate acts of indiscriminate violence against civilians, nor can they offer refuge to those who commit such acts. Despite the recent South Asia tests, more and more nations have enlisted in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Respected nations from South Korea to South Africa to South America have decided that it is best for their people to forgo developing such weapons. The tide of nonproliferation agreements reached in the last two decades is ample evidence of this trend.

What have proliferated are multilateral efforts to protect international security. The UN, regional organizations and coalitions have countered threats to peace during the Gulf war and in peacekeeping operations around the world. This global network has grown largely without Iranian participation. But Iran would be welcome if it is willing to make a constructive contribution.

We believe that President Khatemi expressed the sentiments of the Iranian people when he voiced the desire for a world in which misunderstandings can be overcome and mutual respect and logic govern relations among states. The United States shares that desire, and we are taking concrete steps in that direction. This month, we implemented a new, more streamlined procedure for issuing visas to Iranians who travel to the United States frequently. We also revised our Consular travel warning for Iran so that it better reflects current attitudes in Iran toward American visitors.

We have supported cultural and academic exchanges and facilitated travel to the United States by many Iranians. We are ready to explore further ways to build mutual confidence and avoid misunderstandings. The Islamic Republic should consider parallel steps. If such a process can be initiated and sustained in a way that addresses the concerns of both sides, then we in the United States can see the prospect of a very different relationship. As the wall of mistrust comes down, we can develop with the Islamic Republic, when it is ready, a road map leading to normal relations.

Obviously, two decades of mistrust cannot be erased overnight. The gap between us remains wide. But it is time to test the possibilities for bridging this gap.

As the nations I have focused on tonight reflect, Asia is a region in transition. This is true from the Persian Gulf to the Korean Peninsula and virtually all points in-between. In responding to this dynamic world, America cannot view every issue or nation through a single prism. We must take into account the full range of our interests. We must combine adherence to principle with a pragmatic sense of what works. We must know when to raise our voices in public and when to work quietly behind the scenes. We must know when to engage and when to isolate, and we must always be flexible enough to respond to change and to seize historic opportunities when they arise. Above all, we must maintain our commitment to human freedom. For of all the ties that bind together the American and Asian peoples, this is the strongest.

The story of Asia throughout this century has been the story of steadily increasing freedom and independence, steadily increasing control by the people of their own lives and their own destinies. For more than 200 years, that has also been the story of America. And it remains the basic objective of U.S. foreign policy to make possible a world in which every people, including those from every part of Asia, have that freedom and that control.

Thank you very much. ■

Secretary Albright

The African Growth And Opportunity Act

June 17, 1998

Opening statement before the Senate Finance Committee, Washington, DC.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am delighted to be here to testify on behalf of one of our top legislative priorities, the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

My focus this morning will be on the foreign policy rationale behind the Act. And that rationale is truly powerful, for this legislation frames a new U.S. approach to a new Africa.

For a century or more, outsiders have either been telling Africans what to do or manipulating loyalties for geopolitical advantage. We have a chance now, which we must seize, to usher in a better era based on changed attitudes and a changing African reality.

I do not minimize Africa's continuing problems. And I will comment on two of them briefly before I take your questions. But it would be a grave error to let problems rooted in Africa's past blind us to the immense possibilities in Africa's future.

Consider that within the past 10 years, the number of democratically elected governments in Sub-Saharan Africa has more than quadrupled. Consider that of the 48 nations in that region, no fewer than three dozen have begun economic reforms—so that the lost decade of the 1980s is being replaced by the growth decade of the 1990s.

Consider that a new generation of Africans has come of age, raised in the era of independence, liberated from Cold War divisions, ready and increasingly able to assume an equal place at the world table. And consider that today, we export fully one-third more to Africa than to all the states of the former Soviet Union.

To those who think the United States does not have important interests in Africa's success, I say, think again. Already, 100,000 American jobs depend on our trade with Africa. Already Africa supplies more than 13% of our oil—nearly as much as the Middle East. And already there can be no doubt that a stronger, more stable, and prosperous Africa will be a better partner for security and peace—and for our efforts to counter global threats such as drug trafficking, terror, and crime.

In decades past, U.S. policymakers, when they thought of Africa at all, would ask: What can we do for Africa, or what can we do about Africa? Today, the right question is: What can we do with Africa—to build real democracies based on open markets and respect for human rights? By asking this question, we undertake the most fundamental change in our policy toward Africa since the independence movement blossomed on that continent four decades ago. And that change is clearly embodied in the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

This legislation was developed, on a bipartisan basis and with strong Administration support, here on Capitol Hill. It reflects our strategy for placing trade and investment at the forefront of our economic relations with Africa, as they are with other regions around the globe. The philosophy behind the Act is simple. America stands ready to help those African countries that help themselves.

Specifically, the Act would achieve this by providing duty-free access to U.S. markets for many additional African products. It would provide reform-oriented African countries with special preferential access for textiles and other labor-intensive products. It would pave the way for hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment, through two new OPIC funds.

And it would facilitate technical assistance—to help Africans take maximum advantage of all the opportunities inherent in the world economy. The benefits contained in this bill are not entitlements. They will not be available to every country. Some object to that. But, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, we would be doing no favor to Africa or to ourselves if we failed to recognize in our laws the strides that African reformers are taking.

This bill is designed to encourage African governments to place their economies on a sound financial footing, to allow private enterprise to function within the rule of law, to permit outside investment, and to liberalize trade. At the same time, the bill encourages African countries to tend to such development imperatives as poverty reduction, providing adequate health care, creating educational opportunity, and encouraging a new generation of African entrepreneurs.

This last factor is vital, because nothing will contribute more to Africa's future. That's why the legislation specifically supports microenterprise and improved economic opportunities for women. Those are the smart things for Africa to be doing. And they are the right things for America to be supporting.

"Indeed, almost every government in Sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa, is now on record in support of this proposal. Given the diversity of Africa, that is amazing evidence that the time is right, the time is now, to enact this legislation."

I believe one of the most striking arguments for this bill is that it is supported by many African governments that may not even qualify initially for its benefits. This reflects the dramatic change in philosophy that has been sweeping Africa. Throughout the continent, this legislation is seen as a catalyst for deepening reform and for opening the door over time to full participation for many African countries in the world economy.

During his visit to that continent this spring, President Clinton heard warm praise for this legislation from most African leaders. And as the committee may know, it is ardently supported by Africa's diplomatic corps here in Washington. Indeed, almost every government in Sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa, is now on record in support of this proposal. Given the diversity of Africa, that is amazing evidence that the time is right, the time is now, to enact this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I do want to emphasize that, although trade and investment are increasing in importance in our relations with Africa, that does not mean we can ignore the continuing need in many parts of Africa for aid. The Act does not impose new conditions on current assistance. Instead, this legislation explicitly states that we should continue to provide development assistance to help establish a more receptive environment for trade and investment. And let me stress that we are continuing such aid. During this decade, we have contributed more than $15 billion in assistance to Africa.

Senators, as you know, some have expressed concern that the African Growth and Opportunity Act will lead to a major exodus of American jobs, especially in the area of textiles. The Administration takes concerns of this type seriously, because we are committed to strengthening core labor standards around the world—and we do not want to see American workers undercut.

So it is important to recognize a limit on the legislation we are now considering. Because of the difference in the size of our economies, its impact will be felt far more in Africa than in the United States.

An International Trade Commission—ITC—study concluded that even if all quotas and tariffs on African textiles and apparel were lifted, African imports still would constitute just 1% of total U.S. imports in these categories. So let's keep things in proportion. Last year, our domestic textile and apparel production was approximately $160 billion. Our imports of these products from Africa amounted to less than $^{1}/_{400}$ of that amount. The ITC estimates that the African Growth and Opportunity Act could impact, at most, 700 U.S. jobs. In the current economy, we create more than 10 times that many jobs every day of the year.

Moreover, American businesses, workers, and farmers will benefit greatly over time as Africa becomes more prosperous and open. The continent is home to two-thirds of 1 billion potential consumers—as many as Japan and Southeast Asia combined. Yet our exports represent just 7% of this vast untapped market, compared to Europe, with more than 40%.

Mr. Chairman, in 1965, Nigeria's GNP was equal to Indonesia's, and Ghana's was the same as South Korea's. Over the past three decades, enormous opportunities were lost in Africa, just as they were seized in Asia. Today, we have a chance, with our African partners, to begin to make up some of that lost time. If we succeed, we can contribute to our own well-being and to a world that is safer, more prosperous, and more free than it otherwise would be. That would be a great gift to the future. And it is ample reason, in my judgment, for the Senate to act positively and soon to approve the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Before closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to touch very briefly on two related subjects. The United States is deeply disturbed by the risk of full-scale war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and we have participated very actively in diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution.

These are two of the poorest countries on Earth with, ironically, two of the most capable leaders in Africa. The war, quite frankly, is madness. We are pleased the two governments have agreed to a moratorium on air strikes. We urge them to take additional steps, soon, to restore mutual confidence, end all fighting, and find a peaceful and permanent solution to their dispute.

In Nigeria, a moment of decision has been reached. General Abubakar and his new government have an opportunity to put their nation firmly on the democratic path, which is also the path to prosperity and social progress for the Nigerian people. We welcome the release of nine political detainees this week and hope for the release of other political prisoners, including Moshood Abiola. We urge a swift and credible transition to civilian rule, in which basic freedoms of speech, press, and assembly are respected. And we are prepared to work with Nigeria and the Nigerian people in the context of such progress.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me acknowledge that the African Growth and Opportunity Act is sometimes paired with another of our priorities, which is enhanced trade benefits to Caribbean Basin nations. While these two bills employ different approaches, the Administration supports both and would not object to their being considered together, if that should be the will of this committee and the Senate. Our goal is to see them become law. ■

Susan E. Rice

Prospects for Democracy in Nigeria

June 25, 1998

Statement by the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs before the House International Relations Committee, Washington, DC.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here and to address this committee on prospects for democracy in Nigeria. It has been several months since I testified before the Africa subcommittee on the broad parameters of U.S. policy toward Africa. Since then, the continent has been the subject of increased and sustained attention, especially in light of the President's historic trip to Africa in March and movement on the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

The President's trip to six African countries highlighted Africa's progress over the past decade. The days of apartheid, Cold War conflict, and one-party states are over. The number of democracies has quadrupled in 10 years in Africa, and economic growth has risen from the negative numbers of the 1980s to over 4% on average the past 2 years. Especially strong performers include Uganda and Cote d' Ivoire, which experienced 6% and 7% growth rates, and Mozambique, with growth last year in double-digit figures. As a result, the United States is committed to a new partnership with the African continent—a partnership based on mutual respect, mutual interest, and mutual security.

While I note today Africa's continued strides toward peace and political and economic reform, I would be remiss not to mention a few recent setbacks. The ongoing border strife between Ethiopia and Eritrea, for example, threatens stability in the Horn of Africa and illustrates just how fragile post-conflict nations can be. I note and appreciate the concurrent resolution passed yesterday by the Africa subcommittee on the conflict between the two countries. We deplore and condemn the recent attempted coup in Guinea-Bissau by elements of the armed forces against the democratically elected government. And we remain disappointed by the slow pace of progress in Central Africa, especially in both of the Congos.

Nigeria, however, stands at an unexpected and important crossroads. Its new leadership has an unprecedented opportunity to open the political process and institute a genuine transition to civilian democratic rule. During this official period of mourning, we extend again our friendship to the Nigerian people as well as our condolences and stand with them as they dream of a brighter future.

The people of Nigeria want and deserve a responsible and accountable government. Their time may well be now. Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar can play a noble and decisive role in shaping their country's destiny by charting a fresh course toward reform in Nigeria.

At stake is not only Nigeria's relationship with the international community but also its role as a regional leader in helping bring stability to a volatile neighborhood and in assuming its rightful place on the global stage. Nigeria is large and influential, with an ancient culture, tremendous human talent, enormous wealth, and democratic experience. It is home to more than 100 million people, with over 250 ethnic groups, an abundance of natural resources, and the largest domestic market on the continent. Nigeria has played, and continues to play, a significant role in West Africa, especially as Chair of the Economic Community of West African States and through the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group—ECOMOG. The country was instrumental in restoring to power the legitimate Sierra Leone Government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on March 10 of this year. In Liberia, Nigeria actively supported the peace process by contributing over 75% of the West African peacekeeping troops and by helping enable open and transparent elections in Liberia just a year ago. We thus have come to value Nigeria as an important potential partner in helping bring security to troubled neighboring states.

Mr. Chairman, let me be plain: U.S. interests in Nigeria remain constant. We seek a stable, prosperous, democratic Nigeria that respects human rights. We also have sought better cooperation with the Government of Nigeria in combating international narcotics trafficking and crime. We hope to be in a position to promote

favorable trade and investment partnerships in one of the largest economies on the continent. Finally, we hope Nigeria will continue to play a responsible role in resolving regional conflicts.

Yet, it is no secret that there have been serious strains in U.S.-Nigerian relations in recent times. The military has ruled Africa's most populous nation for 28 out of 38 years since its independence, often with an iron fist. Misguided policies, mismanagement, and corruption have stifled Nigeria's economy. Basic human rights, including freedom of speech and assembly, have been trampled upon. Then-Head of State Ibrahim Babangida annulled the presidential elections 5 years ago, leading to the military overthrow of a civilian-led interim national government. Gen. Sani Abacha suspended the constitution and imprisoned the apparent winner of the 1993 presidential elections, M.K.O. Abiola.

Moreover, the Nigerian Government detained pro-democracy leaders and political figures who were critical of the government, including former Head of State Olusegun Obasanjo, along with numerous others including human rights activists and journalists. Military tribunals denied due process to political and other prisoners, prompting both the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Commission to condemn the Nigerian Government and call upon it to respect fundamental human rights and restore civilian rule. The government's November 10, 1995 execution of environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Nine met with swift international response, including the imposition of additional sanctions by the United States, the European Union, and the Commonwealth.

We were skeptical but still hopeful 3 years ago when General Abacha pledged a genuine transition to civilian democratic rule by October 1, 1998. But, by any standard, it quickly became clear that General Abacha's transition was gravely flawed and failing.

Our road map for measuring democratic progress is universal and unwavering. A credible transition would include a transparent and participatory process; unconditional release of political prisoners; provisions for free political activity and party formation allowing all those who wish to run to do so freely; freedom of association, speech, and the press; unrestricted access to the media by all candidates and parties; impartial electoral preparations; and elections open to all.

The crowning blow for General Abacha's transition came in April this year when the five political parties, all sponsored by the military government, bowed to heavy regime pressure and selected General Abacha to be their sole candidate. The subsequent low-voter turnout for the government-organized legislative elections eloquently demonstrated the people's widespread rejection of the transition program that was heading toward a predetermined outcome.

But today, the Nigerian people have a fresh chance for freedom, an opportunity finally to realize their country's full potential. The United States is heartened by initial promising steps taken by Nigeria's new leaders, including the release of former Head of State Obasanjo and 14 other prominent political prisoners and the announcement by the government that more detainees will soon be released. We hope Chief M.K.O. Abiola and others will be released swiftly and unconditionally. We also applaud General Abubakar's decision to consult with representatives of various political groups on how to restore credibility to the transition. The new dialogue between the government and civil society is a critical and positive precursor to democratization and open and fair elections. We hope these consultations with civil society, human rights, and pro-democracy groups will continue and help to tap the energy and will of the Nigerian people.

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The Government of Nigeria has pledged to complete the transition process by October 1, 1998. Some political groups have called for a delay of 3 to 12 months. Our hope remains for a credible and lasting transition in the shortest time possible. Thus, over the next few weeks our goal will be to encourage the new leadership to move swiftly along the path to democracy. We look forward to establishing a productive dialogue with General Abubakar and with other key leaders. At the same time, we will also consult closely and constructively with our friends and allies in Africa and elsewhere on developments in Nigeria. We will pursue with renewed vigor efforts to cooperate with Nigeria on counternarcotics and to resolve outstanding airport security issues. And, working with Congress and this committee, we will aim to increase U.S. assistance to civil society and pro-democracy efforts.

Already the lines of communication between the United States and Nigeria are opening. President Clinton called General Abubakar on June 14 to express our hopes for a new beginning for Nigeria. Our Ambassador, William Twaddell,

met with General Abubakar last week to lay the groundwork for a working relationship we hope will be of great value to both our countries. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering looks forward to leading a delegation to the country in the near future to continue our dialogue with the new leadership.

We are investing in this high-level effort because the stakes in Nigeria are enormous. A democratic Nigeria is key to a stable and prosperous West Africa, an invigorated Africa, and thus to U.S. national interests and national security. Already, the United States is the top foreign investor in Nigeria. Nigeria is our largest trading partner in all of Africa. Last year, our exports to Nigeria reached $814 million, while U.S. imports were over $6 billion. An open and free body politic can breathe new life into Nigeria's stagnant economy. All Nigerians deserve to benefit finally from the vast wealth of their country.

Ultimately, of course, the success of democracy in Nigeria depends on the Nigerian people. The United States has a unique opportunity to support the people of Nigeria as they work to fulfill long overdue commitments to create a dynamic, prosperous, and democratic society that will help lead Africa into the 21st century. Much work remains to be done in Africa, by Africans. In Sierra Leone, for example, atrocities of the former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council / Revolutionary United Front junta are creating a humanitarian crisis which threatens thousands of innocent civilians and neighboring countries. Guinea-Bissau is now a tinderbox where once there was a freely elected government. The troubled Congos and the Horn of Africa, as well as other promising emerging democracies, face critical tests. Nigeria's role will be influential throughout the continent. We sincerely hope that the new leadership in Nigeria will plot a course toward democracy at home, and, in doing so, further advance our mutual interests in safeguarding democracy and peace throughout Africa.

Mr. Chairman, I am committed to working with your committee and the Subcommittee on Africa as we seek to forge a new U.S.-Nigeria relationship in the context of a successful transition to civilian democratic rule. Over the past few years, we have witnessed the demise of apartheid in South Africa, which unleashed the incredible potential of a formerly divided nation. What Pretoria is to Africa's southern region, Abuja can be to West Africa and beyond. As South Africa did at the end of this century, Nigeria has the chance to do at the turn of the next century to better the lives of hundreds of millions of Africans at home and abroad. We look forward to working with Congress to make plain to the new leadership that we are there to support them as they weigh these historic options and choose the right path toward reform. To this end, I pledge my own best efforts and respectfully ask for your continued wise counsel and support. Thank you.■

Melinda Kimble

Political Will in the Response To the AIDS Pandemic

June 25, 1998

Remarks by the Acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs to the National Council on International Health, Washington, DC.

Dire predictions from the 1980s have become the reality of the 1990s, as HIV moves from the latent state to active disease in an increasing number of people around the world. The cumulative number of those infected has more than tripled from the 10 million infections estimated in 1990. UNAIDS and the World Health Organization estimate that 16,000 new infections are acquired every day and that over 30 million people are infected with HIV.

AIDS is a global problem touching virtually every country and every family around the world. It does not recognize international borders. Growing global population, massive demographic shifts, poverty, greater population mobility, and other imbalances between people and nature contribute to the upsurge of HIV / AIDS and other infectious diseases.

The disease can have a far-reaching impact. Trade and travel, important sectors of most economies, can be negatively affected, as can the ability of a nation to muster troops to keep peacekeeping commitments. The disease can also afflict citizens who are otherwise productive contributors to national economies.

The immense impact of HIV / AIDS on life expectancy and health, the implications on labor and productivity, the possibility that AIDS will exacerbate problems of poverty and inequality, and its potential implications for economic stability and security makes HIV / AIDS an important foreign policy issue. This broad reach also underscores the need for governments to confront the epidemic early. Critical to turning the tide is governmental acknowledgment and political commitment for national and international action.

Diplomatic Initiatives To Promote More Active Involvement on HIV/AIDS Issues by National Governments

We know that more must and can be done by the global community and by the Department of State to reduce the global spread of HIV / AIDS and that political commitment at the highest level of national government makes the critical difference. Many governments remain slow to acknowledge and to respond with appropriate measures to prevent the economic and social devastation this disease portends if left unchecked. It takes strong leadership at the highest levels working with international institutions, other nations, and non-governmental sectors to join the fight by sharing needed specialized skills in support of global interests to combat the AIDS pandemic.

HIV / AIDS should be introduced to a greater extent in the U.S. diplomatic and policy dialogue in order to underscore the recognition of HIV / AIDS as an international problem with political, social, and economic impacts which go well beyond the boundaries of the traditional health sector.

The State Department and senior officials should play a central role in raising HIV / AIDS in international fora, and we are strengthening our efforts to put the full weight of our diplomatic infrastructure behind enhanced political commitment for international action. The Department of State has the means to advance this issue with more than 250 diplomatic and consular posts around the world, including five missions to the United Nations.

Posts through our mission-planning process will be charged with active interventions to raise awareness with host government officials.

Ambassadors and other foreign policy officials at posts are instructed to:

- Urge foreign leaders to openly address the HIV/AIDS pandemic in their own countries and to address the adverse economic and social impacts of HIV/AIDS.
- Urge other governments to increase spending or to reallocate funds to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and to strengthen AIDS research efforts.
- Emphasize the importance of National AIDS Action Plans which involve all relevant governmental agencies, ministries, NGOs and the private sector.
- Encourage foreign leaders to support the Joint UN Programme on AIDS.

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The State Department, through formalized briefings as part of our National Foreign Affairs Training Center curricula, and by country-specific regional briefings to senior officials, is working to heighten awareness of the foreign policy implications of HIV/AIDS to the foreign policy community through all available channels.

The State Department will convene an interagency working group to discuss mechanisms whereby the U.S. Government may work more closely with development banks to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in development activities. And we will convene regular interagency meetings to discuss the international calendar and to develop common approaches on HIV/AIDS issues and other infectious disease issues.

Using the HIV/AIDS component of the Common Agenda with Japan as a model, the State Department and USAID will pursue agreements with other donors to work more closely on HIV/AIDS in priority countries.

Recognition of the problem and political commitment to support prevention programs is vital to the success of AIDS prevention.

Previous and Ongoing Accomplishments

At the recent G-8 summit in Birmingham, members pledged a shared international effort to reduce the global scourge of AIDS through vaccine development, preventive programs and appropriate therapy, and by continued support for UNAIDS. This follows from the U.S. Government's successful effort which has made HIV/AIDS part of the G-8 agenda since 1996 in Lyon and a successful centerpiece for the Denver summit in 1997.

In his March 1998 African state visit, the President emphasized continued support for AIDS interventions in Uganda and other countries of the region. One year earlier, in March 1997, the First Lady highlighted Uganda's successful effort to reduce transmission of HIV in a public appearance at the AIDS Information Center that has provided counseling and information to tens of thousands of Ugandans.

On World AIDS Day 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright issued a historic statement recognizing the severity of the disease and the enormity of the AIDS orphan issue. The statement also renewed the U.S. Government's commitment to prevent HIV infection, to increase research, and to improve treatment for those affected by the pandemic.

Since 1986, USAID has committed more than $800 million to HIV/AIDS programs to establish effective partnerships with international organizations, donors, national governments, and non-governmental organizations to develop innovative approaches to HIV/AIDS prevention and to build community capacity to slow the spread of the epidemic. USAID continues to lead international efforts to address the HIV/AIDS through development assistance, research, and policy dialogue. USAID has established 540 HIV/AIDS projects in 42 countries.

U.S. International Strategy on HIV/AIDS

In July 1995, the State Department released the first U.S. International Strategy on HIV/AIDS. The strategy, a product of an interagency effort, contained a set of priorities for action in combating the worldwide spread of HIV/AIDS. We are now working with other agencies to develop a new, unified U.S. Government international strategy on HIV/AIDS.

We hope to focus our new effort on fulfilling the President's commitment to develop an HIV/AIDS vaccine, on addressing the foreign policy issues surrounding the availability and affordability of new HIV/AIDS treatments, and in addressing the problem of AIDS-orphaned children.

As the strategy develops, we will seek the input of the non-governmental AIDS organizations, as well as business and trade representatives. Upon completion of the new strategy, ambassadors and other embassy representatives will meet with host-country counterparts to describe the strategy and encourage leaders to expand HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation programs.

Conclusion

HIV/AIDS presents a global problem that demands an international solution. We must work together to forge the international partnerships needed to meet the many challenges of this disease and to share knowledge gained in our effort to stem its spread.

The Department of State must continue to advance the issue internationally and encourage political commitment at the highest level of national government to act at home and around the globe. A unified front by the U.S. Government and international partners in seeking practical solutions and strengthened coordination is crucial in our battle against this common enemy. ■

Charles Kartman

POW/MIA Accounting Efforts in Asia

June 17, 1998

Statement by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs before the House International Relations Committee, Washington, DC.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to speak with you today on U.S. policy on the POW/MIA issue in Vietnam and elsewhere in East Asia and the Pacific. This is an opportune time to discuss POW/MIA accounting in light of the upcoming annual meeting of the National League of Families. Particularly in the case of Vietnam, I believe it is useful to review our progress as you consider renewal of the Jackson-Vanik waiver for Vietnam. In addition to Vietnam, I will review our POW/MIA accounting efforts elsewhere in Asia: Laos, Cambodia, Korea, and China. While I will discuss our policy in the area, Mr. Smith will provide details on our activities.

Vietnam

I would like to begin with Vietnam, which is for obvious reasons the focal point of our accounting efforts. There are still over 1,500 Americans unaccounted for in Vietnam, as well as another 500 from neighboring countries.

We have consistently emphasized to the Vietnamese that obtaining the fullest possible accounting of our missing from the Vietnam war is our highest priority in our relations with Vietnam. Every senior American official who has met with Vietnamese Government representatives has stressed this point in order to ensure that there can be no misunderstanding of our position.

Vietnam understands well the importance of this issue to the American Government and people and has been providing a high level of cooperation to us in our accounting efforts over the last several years. It was this excellent cooperation that enabled us to establish diplomatic relations in 1995 and to develop normal relations in other areas of mutual interest. I will discuss some of these areas in which we are normalizing in a moment, but first I would like to summarize where we are on POW/MIA accounting.

On March 4 of this year, President Clinton issued a determination that Vietnam has been "cooperating fully in good faith" with us to account for our missing. This was the third time the President has validated Vietnam's cooperation. There are four areas that the President has identified to measure our cooperation. The following represents data as of June 6.

1. Concrete results from efforts by Vietnam to recover and repatriate remains:

- We have conducted 30 joint field activities (JFAs) in Vietnam since 1993;
- A total of 233 remains have been repatriated and 97 remains identified since 1993;
- Vietnamese teams have provided reports regarding their unilateral investigations of 115 cases.

2. Continued resolution of "last known alive" priority cases:

- Of 196 persons associated with "last known alive" cases in Vietnam, fate has been determined for all but 43. The fate of five individuals on this list was determined in May 1998;
- The cases have been resolved or remains identified of 34 individuals, 11 in the last 5 years;
- The U.S. Government has resolved special remains cases involving 15 individuals, reducing the initial list of 98 individuals to the current 83. The special remains list is a sample of cases for which the U.S. Government has evidence that the Vietnamese Government at one time possessed remains of American servicemen that were unaccounted for as of 1993.

3. Vietnamese assistance in implementing trilateral investigations with Laos:

- Since the 1994 agreement establishing the mechanism for U.S.-Vietnamese-Lao trilateral investigations, 22 Vietnamese witnesses have participated in operations in Laos;

• In October 1995, witnesses provided information leading to recovery and repatriation in January 1996 of remains associated with cases involving eight unaccounted-for Americans;

• In October 1996, another witness provided information that led to the recovery of remains associated with a case involving four missing Americans;

• Vietnam has identified 32 witnesses for participation in future operations in Laos.

4. Accelerated Vietnamese efforts to provide all POW/MIA-related documents:

• Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons—VNOSMP—has provided documents in 12 separate turnovers totaling 300 documents that consist of 500-600 untranslated pages;

• VNOSMP has conducted unilateral research in 19 provinces;

• Over 195 oral history interviews have been conducted, in addition to several hundred completed as part of JFAs;

• About 28,000 archival items have been reviewed and photographed since January 1993 by joint research teams.

These concrete results are indicative of substantial progress in POW/MIA accounting. None of this would have been possible without extensive Vietnamese cooperation.

Ambassador Peterson's presence in Hanoi is a priceless asset in pursuing our POW/MIA accounting goals. As a former POW, he has a unique credibility and demonstrates his commitment to the issue every day. We could have no better advocate in Hanoi. He has forged valuable ties with Vietnam's leadership that produce dividends on many issues of importance to us.

Cooperation is a two-way street. As Vietnam has worked with us to account for our missing, we have moved forward to normalize relations with Vietnam. One of the most important of these areas is economic normalization. On March 10, the President waived the Jackson-Vanik Amendment for Vietnam, and on June 3, he submitted his determination in support of a renewal of his waiver authority for Vietnam.

Extension of the waiver is in our interest. The Jackson-Vanik waiver is the next step in the normalization of bilateral economic relations. It maintains the availability to American firms of the trade promotion and investment support programs of the Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These programs enable American companies to compete in the potentially lucrative Vietnamese market with foreign companies that receive similar assistance from their governments.

More importantly, the engagement of the U.S. in Vietnam through these programs, diplomatic contacts, and American business encourages Vietnam's integration into world markets and regional organizations. The ties created are a positive force for regional stability.

Insofar as the objectives of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment are concerned, renewal will substantially promote freedom of emigration from Vietnam. In the lead-up to the President's grant of a waiver in March, the prospect of a Jackson-Vanik waiver was an important factor last October in encouraging Vietnam to modify its processing procedures for the Resettlement Opportunity for Vietnamese Returnees—ROVR. Vietnam dropped its requirement for ROVR applicants to obtain an exit permit prior to interview by INS. This change greatly facilitated implementation of ROVR. At the end of April this year, Vietnam similarly modified its procedures for processing former re-education camp detainees, and on June 3 Vietnam informed us that we may interview all Montagnard Orderly Departure Program—ODP—cases. The yearly renewal of the Jackson-Vanik waiver is likely to have influenced Vietnam to facilitate ODP processing.

"Overall, Vietnam has a solid record of cooperation over the last 10-15 years in permitting Vietnamese to emigrate to the U.S. Over 480,000 have emigrated to the U.S. via the ODP, and there are only about 6,900 ODP applicants remaining to be processed."

Overall, Vietnam has a solid record of cooperation over the last 10-15 years in permitting Vietnamese to emigrate to the U.S. Over 480,000 have emigrated to the U.S. via the ODP, and there are only about 6,900 ODP applicants remaining to be processed. With the changes in procedures I mentioned above, we anticipate that we will be able to complete interviews by the end of 1998.

After a slow start initially, Vietnamese performance in implementing the ROVR agreement has improved dramatically since October. As of June 15, Vietnam has cleared for interview 15,322—or 82%—of the 18,786 potential applicants. INS has interviewed 9,892 persons, and 3,267 have departed for the U.S. under the program. Both sides are working to move people through the pipeline as quickly as possible. Vietnam has not yet provided clearance for 2,463 persons. However, it has provided an accounting for those cases, comprising 1,001 persons, that it has not cleared for interview. These are the

remainder of about 3,000 persons for whom we requested an accounting in January 1998. We expect that a significant number of these will be cleared for interview once we have provided additional information to Vietnam. As we near the end of the caseload, we can expect a slowdown as we begin to process the remaining cases; for example, those for whom it has been difficult to obtain accurate addresses. Nevertheless, we will continue to seek information on these cases and an accounting for any cases Vietnam cannot locate or finds ineligible.

We are working to normalize relations with Vietnam in a number of other areas. These include negotiation of a bilateral trade agreement, which with the Jackson-Vanik waiver is a prerequisite for granting MFN status to Vietnam. Last month, we concluded the fifth round of talks on an agreement. The atmosphere was positive, and I think both sides are now better aware of the differences between our positions, although we still have considerable ground to cover to reach an agreement. We are committed to obtaining an agreement that creates a hospitable business environment for American firms in Vietnam.

Our preliminary discussions last March on a civil aviation agreement were disappointing. However, we are hopeful that the new leadership of Vietnam Airlines will reevaluate Vietnam's position and return to the table with greater flexibility.

The U.S. and Vietnam early on identified science and technology as promising areas for cooperation. We hope to negotiate a bilateral science and technology agreement. However, cooperation has been developing even in the absence of an agreement. There have been a number of promising developments, including the return late last year of research data gathered by Dr. Arnold Schechter and Secretary Shalala's visit to Vietnam in December 1997.

Cooperation in counternarcotics is mutually beneficial and we are negotiating a memorandum of understanding—MOU—with Vietnam. Even in the absence of an MOU, we have begun or are planning projects in demand reduction, Vietnamese participation in DEA seminars, and assistance to the police on evidentiary standards and methodology.

We have provided humanitarian assistance worth $3 million per year to Vietnam since 1995 for victims of war, including prosthetics and aid to orphaned children. An assessment team visited Vietnam earlier this year to evaluate prospects for a modest increase in our aid program. The U.S. Agency for International Development—USAID—is currently vetting the team's proposals, but prospects for a marked increase in aid to Vietnam are poor, given the overall budget constraints of USAID and intense competition for funds.

We believe that engagement with Vietnam has produced tangible results. Contact with the outside world has led to increased openness and relaxation of restrictions on personal liberty, in addition to improved access to information and foreign media. Since normalization, several jailed dissidents have been released. Over time, contacts via media, the Internet, trade and investment, travel and exchanges expose the Vietnamese to international standards and values.

Continuing to engage Vietnam, including pressure for greater openness and reform, is one of the keys to improving its respect for human rights, an area of continuing concern. Vietnam denies or curtails basic freedoms to its citizens, including freedom of speech, association, and religion. There are a number of people in jail or under house arrest for the peaceful expression of their political or religious views. We discuss human rights directly with Vietnam at every opportunity and at the highest levels, including Secretary of State Albright and Treasury Secretary Rubin during their recent visits. On May 26, we held the sixth session of bilateral human rights dialogue. We raised both general issues as well as specific detention cases of concern to us.

As you can see from the above, we are engaging Vietnam across a broad spectrum of bilateral and transnational issues. Our goal is to develop a normal relationship with Vietnam that is like our relationships with the other member countries of ASEAN, putting the past behind us. The key to achieving this goal is for both sides to continue the close cooperation on POW/MIA accounting that has made possible the progress in normalization over the last few years. And progress in normalization strengthens our already excellent cooperation in POW/MIA accounting.

Laos

Turning to Laos, the U.S. has four primary interests: Again, ensuring the most complete POW/MIA accounting possible is our first priority. Our other primary interests are counternarcotics efforts in the Golden Triangle; facilitating progress on human rights; and securing the transition of the Lao economy from a command economy to an open, market-oriented system.

Since 1993, we have accounted for 119 Americans missing in Laos. Another 447 remain unaccounted for. JFA 98-41 is currently on-going in southern Laos, with 40 U.S. personnel conducting excavations and investigations.

Lao cooperation in field exercises is excellent. Cooperation in other areas, such as archival research and the Oral History Program, still could stand improvement. We appear to be nearing a milestone in cooperation on archival research; the long-awaited transfer of war-era films from archives in Hanoi to Vientiane should begin this summer.

Vietnamese authorities recently visited the Lao National Film/Video Archive Storage Facility in Vientiane to evaluate its adequacy for holding films with possible POW/MIA footage now stored in Hanoi, a condition they had set for permitting return of the films to Laos. The Vietnamese approved the upgraded facility. Lao officials will travel to Hanoi later this month to prepare war-era films for shipment back to Vientiane.

With the transfer of the films, gaining Lao cooperation in the Oral History Program will become the focus of our diplomatic efforts. The Lao, thus far, have resisted the idea of U.S. military personnel conducting interviews of former senior Lao military and civilian officials but have indicated a willingness to have these officials fill out questionnaires. We will continue to pursue this issue as a priority.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, superb POW/MIA cooperation continued throughout the past year. Cambodia is usually credited with providing us with the best assistance of any country on this issue, and Cambodia's cooperation was not affected by the turmoil in July 1997 or our subsequent suspension of aid.

In February 1998, the Cambodia detachment of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting—JTF-FA—conducted its final joint field operation in remote areas, during which several sets of remains were recovered and formally turned over to the U.S. Government by the head of the Cambodian POW/MIA Committee in a March ceremony at Pochentong Airport. Following this field operation, the Cambodia JTF-FA Detachment was shut down, as all active field investigations had been completed. Other efforts, particularly documentary research and oral history review projects, continue in order to identify other leads on which future field activities could be based.

Korea

A full accounting of all of the more than 8,100 servicemen missing from the Korean war is a top priority of this Administration. We believe that the remains of most of these men are still in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We continue to stress to the D.P.R.K. at every opportunity that the U.S. places the highest priority on their location and return home. As a result of our strenuous efforts, progress in this area has been among the greatest in the range of issues on which we and the North Koreans cooperate.

Let me give you some details about the recent history of our efforts. While North Korea returned several thousand remains immediately following the Korean war, it did not cooperate with us again in this area until the early 1990s. At that time, it returned a total of 208 remains through the United Nations Command—UNC—in Panmunjom. These remains have been difficult to identify because of poor D.P.R.K. recovery techniques. The problem underscored the need for joint recovery operations—JROs—in which U.S. Army forensic specialists could work together with D.P.R.K. military personnel to recover and return remains of U.S. servicemen to the United States.

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The Defense POW/MIA Office—DPMO—did a superb job in negotiating with the North Koreans to reach agreement to hold these JROs and establish the rules under which they would operate. The first JRO took place in July 1996, and resulted in the return of the remains of one U.S. soldier. In 1997, three JROs took place, which resulted in the return of six remains; in addition, U.S. military officials were given access to North Korean military archives for the first time. Five JROs and one joint archival review have been scheduled for 1998. The first of these, in May, resulted in the recovery of two remains. U.S. compensation to North Korea for the JROs is based on agreed-upon formulas that are consistent with our practice worldwide.

In May, at the end of the first JRO this year, the North Koreans delayed return of two sets of remains via the UN Joint Security Area—JSA—at Panmunjom, refusing to transfer them to the UNC under the UN flag, as had been our agreed practice for all previous JROs. This uncertainty made it necessary for us to postpone the second 1998 JRO, which had been scheduled to begin May 26, but the D.P.R.K. has given us assurances that the matter is now resolved.

One of the reasons for our relative success in this area is that we have generally persuaded the North Koreans to treat it as a partly humanitarian issue. However, the North Koreans indicated to us recently that they saw a linkage between agreement on general officer talks and the repatriation procedures. We continue to emphasize to the D.P.R.K. that the MIA remains issue must be kept separate from all others on humanitarian grounds, and that both sides must honor the agreements specifying the terms of each year's joint operations. However, the D.P.R.K. and the U.S. agreed on June 8 to commence general officer talks at Panmunjom. These will be the first formal talks at the general level since 1991.

We are also committed to pursuing all information about the fate of Americans possibly being held against their will in North Korea, although to date there has been no substantiation of such reports. In high-level discussions with North Korean Foreign Ministry and Defense officials, we have raised this issue at every opportunity. The D.P.R.K. Government has responded that, apart from the four Americans who deserted from U.S. military service in the postwar period, there are no American military personnel living in North Korea. We will continue to insist on access to these four men to determine if they have any knowledge of American POWs alive in the D.P.R.K.

China

We also are working with China on POW/MIA accounting. We have received good cooperation from the Chinese Government on World War II and Vietnam war cases and are continuing to press senior Chinese officials to take steps to advance cooperation on Korean war POW/MIA cases. We hope that our strategy of engagement and our effective cooperation with Chinese in other important areas will help produce positive results on this issue.

Our proposal for cooperation includes various initiatives to strengthen our efforts on Korean war cases. We also are seeking a copy of the film "Jiaoliang" (Test of Strength), the documentary clips from the film, and any records relating to documentary, which reportedly contains footage of U.S. Korean war POWs.

Conclusion

Obtaining the fullest possible accounting for our missing is the American Government's highest priority. We can do no less for the families. We have expended much effort on this task, and we will continue to do so until we have done absolutely everything possible to achieve our goal. ■

TREATY ACTIONS

MULTILATERAL

Terrorism
Convention on the prevention and punishment of crimes against internationally protected persons, including diplomatic agents. Adopted by the UN General Assembly Dec. 14, 1973. Entered into force Feb. 20, 1977. 28 UST 1975; TIAS 8532.
Accession: Mauritania, Feb. 9, 1998.
Succession: Macedonia, Mar. 12, 1998; effective Nov. 17, 1991.

International convention against the taking of hostages. Adopted by the UN General Assembly Dec. 17, 1979. Entered into force June 3, 1983; for the U.S. Jan. 6, 1985. TIAS 11081.
Accessions: Lebanon, Dec. 4, 1997;[1] Uzbekistan, Jan. 19, 1998.

Torture
Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. Adopted by the UN General Assembly Dec. 10, 1984. Entered into force June 26, 1987; for the United States Nov. 20, 1994. [Senate] Treaty Doc. 100-20, 100th Cong., 2d Sess.
Accession: Bahrain, Mar. 6, 1998.[2]

War, Prevention of
Convention for the pacific settlement of international disputes. Signed at The Hague Oct. 18, 1907. Entered into force Jan. 29, 1910. TS 536.
Accessions: Chile, Nov. 19, 1997,[1] Eritrea, Aug. 5, 1997; Guyana, Nov. 26, 1997.

BILATERAL

Bangladesh
Investment incentive agreement. Signed at Washington May 19, 1998. Entered into force May 19, 1998.

Botswana
Investment incentive agreement. Signed at Gaborone Dec. 12, 1997.

Chile
Agreement for cooperation concerning the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Program, with appendices. Signed at Santiago Apr. 16, 1998. Entered into force Apr. 16, 1998.

Croatia
Memorandum of understanding concerning protection of intellectual property rights. Signed at Zagreb May 26, 1998. Enters into force on the date of exchange of written notification through diplomatic channels by which parties inform each other that all legislation and regulations necessary to give full effect to obligations undertaken have come into force.

Equatorial Guinea
Investment incentive agreement. Signed at Washington June 11, 1998. Entered into force June 11, 1998.

Fiji
Acquisition and cross-servicing agreement, with annexes. Signed at Suva Apr. 14, 1998. Entered into force Apr. 14, 1998.

Ireland
Protocol amending the consular convention of May 1, 1950, as amended. Signed at Washington June 16, 1998. Enters into force on the 30th day after both parties have been notified that respective domestic requirements have been completed.

Japan
Protocol extending the agreement of June 20, 1988, as extended, on cooperation in research and development in science and technology. Signed at Washington June 16, 1998. Entered into force June 20, 1998.

Agreement relating to and amending the civil air transport agreement of Aug. 11, 1952, as amended, with memorandum of understanding. Effected by exchange of notes at Washington Apr. 20, 1998. Entered into force Apr. 20, 1998.

Kuwait
Memorandum of understanding concerning scientific and technical cooperation in the earth sciences, with annexes. Signed at Reston June 8, 1998. Entered into force June 8, 1998.

Mauritius
Investment incentive agreement. Signed at Port Louis Dec. 15, 1997. Entered into force May 26, 1998.

Philippines
Amendment No. 4 to the strategic objective grant agreement for the governance and local democracy project, with attachment. Signed at Manila May 4, 1998. Entered into force May 4, 1998.

Agreement amending the project grant agreement for the Philippine Assistance Program Support project, as amended. Signed at Manila May 8, 1998. Entered into force May 8, 1998.

Senegal
Agreement amending the agreement of Aug. 28, 1995, regarding the consolidation, reduction, and rescheduling of certain debts owed to, guaranteed by, or insured by the United States Government and its agencies. Effected by exchange of notes at Dakar Nov. 17, 1997 and May 28, 1998. Entered into force May 28, 1998

Switzerland
Agreement for cooperation in the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Program, with appendices. Signed at Berne Apr. 22, 1998. Entered into force Apr. 22, 1998.

Yemen
Agreement regarding the consolidation and rescheduling of certain debts owed to, guaranteed by, or insured by the United States Government and its agency, with annexes. Signed at Sanaa May 19, 1998. Enters into force upon receipt by Yemen of written notice from U.S. that all necessary domestic legal requirements have been fulfilled.■

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[1] With declaration(s).
[2] With reservation(s).